

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-11 (Canceled).

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): An electric switching device comprising:

one or plural power poles, each pole comprising a movable bridge equipped with at least one movable contact configured to cooperate ~~that co-operates~~ with at least one fixed contact of the pole between open and closed positions; and

an approach actuator acting on each movable bridge of the switching device configured to approach and to distance ~~and bring together~~ each movable contact and each corresponding fixed contact;

wherein each pole comprises a force actuator configured to establish contact pressure between each movable contact and each corresponding fixed contact, after the approach actuator has brought each movable contact close to each corresponding fixed contact, and ~~configured to disconnect contact disconnection between~~ each movable contact and each corresponding fixed contact, without use of a mechanical restoring device.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): An electric device according to claim 12, wherein the approach actuator comprises an electrically controlled electromagnetic bistable linear actuator.

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): An electric device according to claim 12, wherein the approach actuator comprises a Voice Coil actuator.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): An electric device according to claim 12, comprising a distinct approach actuator per pole ~~acting~~ configured to act on the movable bridge of each pole.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): An electric device according to claim 12, wherein the force actuator ~~of a corresponding of the poles~~ comprises ~~a at least one~~ piezoelectric element ~~acting~~ configured to act on each fixed contact of the pole.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): An electric device according to claim 12, wherein the force actuator ~~of a corresponding of the poles~~ comprises ~~a at least one~~ piezoelectric element ~~acting~~ configured to act on each movable contact of the movable bridge.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): An electric device according to claim 12, further comprising means for measuring a current circulating in each power pole and linked to an electronic control unit configured to control a position of each approach actuator and the corresponding force actuator.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): An electric device according to claim 18, wherein the electronic control unit comprises means for determining the position of the approach actuator to control ~~regulate~~ the position of each approach actuator.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): A method of closing a contact ~~switching a pole~~ in an electric switching device according to claim 12, ~~wherein closing movement of the contacts~~ comprises comprising:

~~approaching an approach operation allowing~~ the movable bridge to ~~approach~~ each fixed contact by ~~an~~ the approach actuator without making contact between the movable bridge and each fixed contact; and ~~comprises~~

[[a]] connecting each movable contact with each corresponding fixed contact, after said approaching, ~~operating allowing to establish~~ by establishing a contact pressure between each movable contact of the movable bridge and each corresponding fixed contact of the pole by a the force actuator.

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): A method of opening a contact in an electric switching device according to claim 12 ~~20~~, ~~wherein opening movement of the contacts comprises a~~ comprising:

~~disconnecting operation allowing to separate~~ by separating the movable contact of the movable bridge ~~and from~~ the fixed contact of the pole by a the force actuator; ~~and, then a distancing, after said disconnecting, operation of the movable bridge from the fixed contact~~ by ~~an~~ the approach actuator.

Claim 22 (Currently Amended): The ~~A~~ method according to claim 21, wherein the disconnecting ~~operation~~ is performed when ~~the~~ an electric current circulating in the pole is less than a pre-set threshold.

Claim 23 (New): The electric switching device according to claim 12, wherein the approach actuator does not contact the movable contact with the fixed contact.

Claim 24 (New): The electric switching device according to claim 12, wherein the force actuator comprises a piezoelectric element acting on the movable bridge so as to deform the moveable bridge to move the movable contact to the fixed contact.

Claim 25 (New): An electric switching device comprising:
a pole comprising a movable contact, a fixed contact and a force actuator; and
an approach actuator configured to move said movable contact relative to the fixed contact between an open position and an intermediate position, wherein said movable contact and said fixed contact are separate from each other in said open position and in said intermediate position;

wherein said force actuator is configured to displace at least one of said movable contact or said fixed contact from said intermediate position to a closed position, wherein said movable contact and said fixed contact are in contact with each other in said closed position, said force actuator being further configured to displace said at least one of said movable contact or said fixed contact from said closed position to said intermediate position.

Claim 26 (New): The electric switching device according to claim 25, wherein said force actuator is configured to displace said at least one of said movable contact or said fixed contact from said closed position to said intermediate position without use of a mechanical restoring device.

Claim 27 (New): The electric switching device according to claim 25, wherein said force actuator is configured to displace said at least one of said movable contact or said fixed contact from said intermediate position to a closed position without use of said approach actuator.

Claim 28 (New): The electric switching device according to claim 27, wherein said force actuator is configured to displace said at least one of said movable contact or said fixed contact from said closed position to said intermediate position without use of said approach actuator.

Claim 29 (New): The electric switching device according to claim 25, wherein said force actuator comprises a piezoelectric element.

Claim 30 (New): The electric switching device according to claim 29, wherein said piezoelectric element is coupled to said fixed contact, wherein said piezoelectric element is configured to deform so as to displace said fixed contact between said intermediate position and said closed position.

Claim 31 (New): The electric switching device according to claim 29, wherein said piezoelectric element is coupled to said movable contact, wherein said piezoelectric element is configured to deform so as to displace said movable contact between said intermediate position and said closed position.

Claim 32 (New): The electric switching device according to claim 25, comprising a three of said poles, each of said poles comprising at least one of said movable contact, said fixed contact and said force actuator, each pole corresponding to a phase of an alternative current.

Claim 33 (New): The electric switching device according to claim 25, wherein said force actuator comprises a bistable element, wherein said bistable element is configured to

deform so as to displace said at least one of said fixed contact or movable contact between said intermediate position and said closed position.

Claim 34 (New): The electric switching device according to claim 25, wherein said force actuator comprises an element that is subject to a deformation when a potential is applied to said element.

Claim 35 (New): The electric switching device according to claim 25, wherein said pole comprises two movable contacts and two fixed contacts, each movable contact being configured to contact one of said fixed contact in said closed position.

Claim 36 (New): The electric switching device according to claim 25, wherein a distance between said fixed contact and said movable contact in said intermediate position is less than or equal to 1 mm.

Claim 37 (New): The electric switching device according to claim 25, further comprising a current measuring device configured to measure a current circulating in the pole and coupled to a control unit configured to control the approach actuator and the force actuator based on a measurement of said current measured with said current measuring device.

Claim 38 (New): The electric device according to claim 37, wherein the control unit is configured to control said force actuator so that said force actuator displaces said at least one of said movable contact or said fixed contact from said closed position to said intermediate position when said current circulating in the pole is less than a pre-set threshold.

Claim 39 (New): An electric switching device comprising:

a pole comprising a movable bridge, a movable contact, and a fixed contact, wherein the movable contact is fixed to the movable bridge and the movable contact is configured to cooperate with the fixed contact between open and closed positions; and

an approach actuator configured to approach and to distance the movable contact relative to the fixed contact;

wherein the pole comprises a force actuator configured to establish contact pressure between the movable contact and the fixed contact, after the approach actuator has brought the movable contact close to the fixed contact, and configured to disconnect the movable contact and the fixed contact, without use of a mechanical restoring device.